

IN THE ABSTRACT:

The previously submitted abstract has been amended as set forth below. A clean version of the amended abstract is being submitted herewith on a separate sheet.

Amended Abstract

An information reproducing apparatus has a light source for generating linearly polarized light, a medium having ~~a linear mark~~ linear marks disposed in overlapping relation to one another, and an optical head disposed between the light source and the medium and having a fine aperture. A polarized light control portion in the light source controls the linearly polarized light to pass through the fine aperture of the optical head to generate near-field light having a preselected polarization direction and to irradiate the linear ~~mark~~ marks of the medium with the near-field light so that the preselected polarization direction of the near-field light is orthogonal to a longitudinal axis of each of the linear ~~mark~~ marks. A detector detects light scattered by the linear mark irradiated with the near-field light.